

INCLUSIVE CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT INITIATIVE

How to Talk to Families About Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment

As a teacher or transition coordinator, you play an important role in helping students and their parents (or caregivers) figure out what lies beyond high school. The Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment (ICE) project helps students experience life on a college campus while they can still benefit from the supports and services offered through their IEP.

An important step in inviting students to participate in the ICE project is including parents in a discussion about this opportunity. Here are some pointers to help you communicate clearly and get families and potential students excited about ICE.

A good way to start this discussion is to show concrete examples of students participating in ICE.

- Arrange for former or current students participating in ICE to speak to families.
- Use existing videos of students in the ICE project. You can find some on ThinkCollege.net.
- Collect stories to share from current and former students and family members from your district and statewide.
- Show an example of a schedule to illustrate what a typical day might look like for the student. Point out the opportunities the student will have to develop and reinforce skills on and around the college campus.

Talk about how participation in the ICE project supports the student's plan for life after high school.

- Use course descriptions from the college catalogue to show correlation with the student's preferences and vision for the future. Talk about how participation in a particular course can support the student's goals.
- Point out the various clubs and other extracurricular activities that match a student's recreational or vocational interests. Explain that this is where students can meet people and develop new interests, too. You can usually find a listing of these options on the school's website.

Be prepared to answer questions that parents have about their son's or daughter's safety on campus. This is usually their primary concern. Here are a few tips to share:

- Emphasize planning as a way to maximize safety.
 - For example, David and his team made sure he could find not only the classrooms, but the cafeteria, the rec center, his advisor's office, and the disability support office.
- Talk about inherent risks and ways to provide supports to maximize safety.
 - Nelli knows the bus that she uses to get home from classes leaves at exactly 4:35. She makes sure that she sets the scheduler on her smartphone a few minutes earlier to remind her to be at the stop. She's also programmed in the phone numbers for her parents, her education coach, and the local taxi company in the event she misses the bus.
- Discuss transportation options. Review bus schedules, carpool plans, etc.
 Show examples of how other students get to and from the college campus.
- Show how education coaches can provide academic and social support, as well as teach safety skills.
 - Rosa's coach Abie reviews the steps Rosa should take if she ever feels unsafe. This involves locating prearranged "safe offices," as well as having the number of campus security entered into the contacts on her phone.

Talk about the benefits!

Remember to share how students supported by ICE are benefitting from college. Describe how students are:

- discerning their preferences, interests, needs, and strengths through person-centered planning
- becoming advocates for their own choices and decisions around academic, social, and work activities
- acquiring career and life skills
- accessing student support services
- participating in the life of the college
- experiencing integrated competitive employment

Get the word out about ICE to families! Here's how:

Ask for permission to join IEP or transition planning meetings.

Attend open house night at school.

Bring ICE brochures to career or transition fairs.

Develop and distribute flyers about the ICE partnership.

Share links to ICE videos on YouTube.

Coordinate formal and informal parent-to-parent discussions.

Take advantage of these resources to learn about the ICE project. You'll find information including videos, fact sheets, and interviews that you can share with families:

Think College: Resources for Families (http://bit.ly/1cT258R)

Think College: For Students (http://bit.ly/gKmPEz)

Youth on the Move: Education (http://bit.ly/OWph9q)



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2013).

Report to the MA state legislature: Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment
Partnership Programs for Students with Disabilities.

http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/reports/2013-05ConcurrentEnrollment.pdf



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